

5 August 1959

IRAQ

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- I. Communists in Iraq appear to be shifting to move moderate tactics to forestall repression by Qasim. Qasim angered by the role he believes Commies played in the Kirkuk disorders last month has been adopting a tougher attitude toward them.
- A. After Qasim on 29 July had publicly denounced "anarchist" elements and warned Communist press and front organizations to mend their ways or be crushed, the party newspaper on 3 August condemned "mistakes and shortcomings" of party's "ill-advised individual leadership" and reasserted its loyalty to Qasim.
- B. The paper attributed the party's mistakes, which it called "differences with the highest authorities," to a faulty assessment of the nature of these authorities and of the capabilities of "national forces" to defend the Iraqi Republic. Obviously, the party has decided it cannot now challenge Qasim and the army.
- C. TASS in Moscow has reported plenum of Iraqi Communist party was held in "atmosphere of high-principledness, party unity, self-criticism" and resolved the need to consolidate "all the country's democratic forces."

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II. Published decrees

make clear the extent of the "evil" which has befallen the Communists.

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A. The Popular Resistance Force, which the Communists hoped to develop into a revolutionary militia and which they were using as a channel to obtain arms for their partisans, has been abolished for all practical purposes.

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B. Qasim has ordered the Communist-dominated General Federation of Trade Unions to purge its ranks, and on 4 August the Federation's headquarters was closed.

C. Qasim has warned the students' and women's organization and the peasant front to stay out of political activity.

III. These moves rob the Iraqi Communists of their greatest asset-- popular belief or fear that the Communists had the government on their side and that their triumph was merely a matter of time.

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A. Nevertheless, the hard core Communist organization probably remains intact, despite internal disputes over tactics. A quick turn of the wheel in Iraq might let them take "two steps forward" for the one they have now taken backward.

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